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SUBJECT: SOMALIA: TFG REACHES OUT TO HAWIYE, BUT PLANS FOR  
RENEWED FIGHTING

Classified By: ERIC WONG, ACTING POL-ECON COUNSELOR. REASON: 1.4 (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Somalia's Ambassador to Ethiopia and PermRep to the African Union, Abdulkarim Farah, disputed reports of inter-clan tensions between the Darood (President Abdullahi Yusuf's clan) and Hawiye who control Mogadishu, asserting they were exaggerated by disenchanting Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Ayr sub-clan members and by al-Shabaab hard-liners from the ousted Council of Islamic Courts (CIC). Farah cited various high-level Hawiye appointees, including himself, and noted that the Mudulood (representing a coalition of Hawiye/Abgaal, Hawiye/Hawadle, and other clans) had recently declared the Hawiye's "unified position" in support of the TFG. Farah reported improved security in Mogadishu, following the "liberation" of former "no-go" areas by 10,000 TFG troops supported by Ethiopia. Commenting on EU concerns about war crimes allegedly committed in Somalia by Ethiopian and TFG troops, Farah underscored that the TFG was targeting foreign fighters, not the Somali people. Discussions were now underway on the handover of remaining militants and extremists, including CIC leader Adan Hashi Ayro and "seriously wounded" CIC security chief Sheikh Yusuf Mohamed Siad Indho-Adde. Farah appealed for USG assistance in providing the TFG with a television broadcasting capability, to counter anti-TFG propaganda; and for funding to hold a conference in Addis Ababa for expatriate Somali intellectuals. Farah reported that Canadian FM MacKay had said that unless Canada were allowed to join the International Contact Group on Somalia, it would not provide donor assistance to Somalia. Farah also urged that the USG protest Qatar's recent hosting of meetings of TFG opponents. Farah later speculated that the TFG would prepare for renewed conflict with the Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Ayr sub-clan, in order to clean out remaining extremists in northern Mogadishu. END SUMMARY.

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HAWIYE OPPOSITION TO TFG EXAGGERATED  
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¶2. (C) Ambassador and deputy pol-econ counselor (note-taker) met April 10 with Abdulkarim Farah, the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia's (TFG) Ambassador to Ethiopia and

PermRep to the African Union. Ambassador underscored the importance of the TFG continuing political outreach to other clans. Questioned about ongoing negotiations between the Ethiopian government and Hawiye clan representatives from Somalia, Farah disputed reports of current inter-clan tension between the Darood and the Hawiye who controlled areas in Mogadishu. Farah observed that the Mudulood (representing a coalition of Hawiye/Abgaal, Hawiye/Hawadle, and other clans) had recently declared the Hawiye's "unified position" in support of the TFG. Only members of the Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Ayr, and al-Shabaab hard-liners from the ousted CIC, played up Darood-Hawiye tensions, he said. While some Ayr were moderates, Ayr who sought to derail stability in Somalia held real estate seized from others, and reaped profits from trafficking through Somalia's uncontrolled borders. Those who claimed to speak on behalf of disenchanted Hawiye were only Ayr sub-clan members. Farah refuted the notion that the TFG did not include Hawiye, observing that he, as well as the TFG ambassadors in Nairobi and New York, were all Hawiye. The Hawiye were represented in parliament, and nine TFG ministers were Hawiye, including Prime Minister Ghedi and the interior minister. The Hawiye not only supported the TFG but also welcomed the USG's renewed engagement with Somalia, Farah said.

13. (C) Asserting that PM Ghedi now enjoyed support from Hawiye, Farah said the Hawiye/Abgaal sub-clan would not accept his ouster. Thus, unless the reconciliation commission led by Ali Mahdi specifically recommended leadership changes in the TFG, neither PM Ghedi nor President Yusuf should be replaced until the TFG mandate ended in 2009, Farah said.

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ADDIS ABAB 00001079 002 OF 003

TFG TARGETS FOREIGN FIGHTERS, NOT SOMALIS  
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14. (C) Farah reported improved security in Mogadishu. Hawiye elders' "very positive" support for the TFG could be seen in the recent cessation of violence (e.g., targeted assassinations, attacks on convoys) in Mogadishu over the last 10 days, Farah said. Some 10,000 TFG troops, along with Ethiopian forces (ENDF), had "liberated" several areas from the al-Shabaab that had been "no-go" 15-20 days earlier (such as Balad junction, the stadium, and the pasta factory). Rocket attacks from these areas had now ceased. Farah acknowledged that the TFG troops were primarily Darood, as the Hawiye had not previously supported the TFG.

15. (C) Commenting on reports of EU concerns about alleged war crimes committed in Somalia by Ethiopian and TFG troops, Farah questioned why international human rights monitors had failed to note the abuses committed earlier by the CIC. The TFG was defending its country against foreign fighters, not abusing civilians, he said. Violence in Mogadishu had derived from the high concentration of foreign fighters who supported the CIC, Farah explained. Hundreds of foreign fighters had remained in Mogadishu during the Ethiopians' December 2006 advance, incorrectly believing that the ENDF would stop at Baidoa and not enter Mogadishu. Defeated CIC remnants (e.g., from Kismayo) soon converged in Mogadishu as well. To avoid military engagement in Mogadishu, elders had handed over areas to TFG control, at the request of President Yusuf and PM Ghedi. One could enter Mogadishu only from the north or the south, however, and now al-Shabaab and foreign fighters remained in northern Mogadishu; the TFG targeted them, not the Somali people. While PM Ghedi had warned civilians to leave, there had been some collateral damage, which the TFG regretted.

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TERRORISTS "WILL BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE"  
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¶6. (C) Discussions were now underway on the handover of remaining militants and extremists, including CIC leader Adan Hashi Ayro and CIC security chief Sheikh Yusuf Mohamed Siad Indho-Adde, who had been seriously wounded, Farah said. Renewed fighting could erupt if those remaining refused to surrender to the TFG. Amb. Farah questioned why the USG had advocated the release of CIC Executive Committee Chairman Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, who had been among the last remaining CIC leaders maintaining his public call for jihad against the United States and the West. On the other hand, Farah noted that President Yusuf had pledged immunity for ex-CIC members, if Somalia obtained peace.

¶7. (C) Amb. Farah observed that the TFG would not rely on either Ethiopian or AU peacekeeping forces to target remaining CIC fighters in Somalia, as the TFG feared doing so might backfire and build public support for such hard-liners.

Nor would the TFG use its current military forces, which were now majority-Darood, to pursue CIC remnants; instead, the TFG would seek to empower its security forces through diversity. Nevertheless, Farah said, ultimately, the TFG would guarantee that terrorists such as al-Itihaad al-Islamiya (AIAI) leader Hassan Abdullah Hersi al-Turki "will be brought to justice."

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REQUESTS FOR USG ASSISTANCE WITH PUBLIC DIPLOMACY  
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¶8. (C) Farah appealed for USG assistance in providing the TFG with a television broadcasting capability, stating that he had previously made the request in meetings with USG officials. Farah underscored the need to counter anti-TFG propaganda, especially as the TFG's ministry of information comprised only the minister and his deputy. While AF A/S Frazer had pledged that USG assistance to Somalia would increase from USD 40 million to 100 million, the TFG required

ADDIS ABAB 00001079 003 OF 003

visible assistance immediately, he said. Ambassador noted that VOA Somali programming would increase from one-half to 2 hours, and invited Farah to collaborate further on providing input for printed public diplomacy materials that could be produced by the Embassy for distribution in Somalia.

¶9. (U) To promote further engagement by Somali intellectuals and the Somali diaspora, Farah requested financial assistance from the USG or other donors to hold a 2-3 day conference in Addis Ababa for expatriate Somali intellectuals. The conference would aim to overcome Somali prejudice against Ethiopia, convince Somali diaspora to return to Mogadishu, and reverse the "brain drain" from Somalia. The intellectuals' conference would immediately precede the May 15-16 reconciliation conference, which would be held in Mogadishu, "security permitting." Farah said he had discussed holding the conference under African Union auspices with both AU Peace and Security Commissioner Said Djinnit and AU Commission Deputy Chairperson Patrick Mazimhaka, but that funds were needed. Participants would include Somalis from the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Kenya, as well as American academics.

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CANADA SHOULD JOIN INTERNATIONAL CONTACT GROUP  
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¶10. (C) Hailing USG support for the TFG, Amb. Farah said Somalia relied more on the United States than any other country, and offered the following comments on TFG relations with other external actors:

-- Farah recommended that Canada be allowed to join the International Contact Group on Somalia, noting that Canadian FM Peter MacKay had informed him that without joining, Canada would not provide funds for Somalia. As contact group members were all friends of Somalia, Canada should be allowed to join, Farah said.

-- Addressing TFG relations with Arab League members, Farah said that while the League had pledged USD 26 million to Somalia in 2005, only Algeria had paid its share. The TFG had close relations with Yemen, as Yemen had previously provided military hardware to President Yusuf. Following a recent visit by Farah to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia now backed the TFG. By providing Arabic-language instructors, Egypt had long-standing cultural ties with Somalia. However, political tensions with Egypt stemmed from 1998, when President Yusuf and another Darood general chose to depart a Cairo conference of Somali clans in order to travel to Addis Ababa for consultations with Ethiopia.

-- Farah urged that the USG protest Qatar's recent hosting of meetings of TFG opponents based in Asmara, which had included Somali-American participants.

¶11. (C) COMMENT: Amb. Farah later speculated that the TFG would prepare for renewed conflict with the Hawiye/Habr-Gedir/Ayr sub-clan, in order to clean out remaining extremists in northern Mogadishu. Farah's assertion that violence in Mogadishu derives from its high concentration of foreign fighters follows an April 9 announcement by Ethiopia's foreign ministry that "suspected international terrorists have been and are still being captured by the joint forces" of the TFG and Ethiopia, and that those released from Ethiopian custody include fighters from Tanzania, Sudan, the UAE, Denmark, and Sweden. Post supports providing the TFG with assistance to bolster its public diplomacy efforts, and urges that the Department review whether resources are available to meet the TFG's specific requests (paragraphs 8-9). END COMMENT.  
YAMAMOTO